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TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE 9979

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [CVIS](#) [APER](#) [AMGT](#) [AE](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON OCTOBER 1, 2009 UAE VISA REQUIREMENT

Ref: (A) Abu Dhabi 503  
(B) Abu Dhabi 579  
(C) Abu Dhabi 852  
(D) Abu Dhabi 930  
(E) Abu Dhabi 939

¶1. The UAE government transition to its new visa policy will take place on October 1, 2009. Effective this date, all persons traveling to the UAE on a U.S. diplomatic or official passport must obtain a visa prior to arrival. As with any new policy, we expect that there will be a few bumps along the path to full implementation.

¶2. Diplomatic and official travelers may apply for a visa at any UAE embassy. If there is not a UAE embassy in the country in which the traveler lives, the application should be sent to a UAE embassy in a nearby country. The visa application form and requirements (photos, etc.) will be accessible via the given embassy's internet website.

¶3. The UAEG has indicated that there should be no fee for a diplomatic or official visa, and the visa will usually be processed within 72 hours. U.S. diplomatic and official travelers should generally be issued multiple-entry visas with a validity of five years, in keeping with reciprocity. Travelers may stay in the UAE for up to 60 days each visit.

¶4. Although final policy remains unclear, UAEG has indicated there will not be any exemption for persons transiting the UAE on diplomatic or official passports. We therefore strongly recommend that all transit passengers secure a visa prior to their arrival in the UAE.

¶5. There is no change in the visa policy for persons traveling on regular (blue) passports. Persons traveling on official business should not/not attempt to enter or transit the UAE using tourist procedures.

¶6. While the UAE government has set a service standard of 72 hours to respond to visa requests, we anticipate delays in the first few months. We strongly encourage travelers to apply for their visas at least two weeks in advance of travel. Because adjudication takes place in Abu Dhabi, UAE embassies abroad can expedite visas only in very limited circumstances. Officials without immediate need to travel may be well served by delaying application until the new policy has been fully implemented.

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